European cycle challenge gives youth helpline charity pedal power

Thursday 4 June, 2015

18 cyclists have completed a once-in-a-lifetime, 900 mile charity challenge across Europe in aid of youth helpline charity Get Connected, riding from London to Milan in just nine days to and raising more than £120,000 to support children and young people in crisis all over the UK.

First time riders were side-by-side with cycling enthusiasts for Ride 999, the first challenge of this kind for Get Connected. Participants took in nine countries across Europe and cycled physically taxing routes such as the spectacular Splugen Pass on the borders of Switzerland – the highest pass in the Alps. Each rider spun their wheels at least 673,200 times and spent long enough on their bikes to ride from London to Newcastle three times.

These intrepid fundraisers overcame personal trauma to take part in the challenge, with one rider continuing to train despite double pneumonia and another pressing on even with broken bones in his foot! Funds raised will help Get Connected support vulnerable children and young people seeking support with issues as varied as self-harm, sexual health, homelessness and unemployment.

Genevieve Hinchliff, Fundraising and Events Officer at Get Connected, says: "*Young people have never been more in need of help, and the money that this challenges raises will be vital in providing our free, confidential helpline service over the next year. The Ride 999 team have been fantastic and we're really grateful for their hard work!*"

Get Connected supports anyone under 25, no matter what the issue. Trained volunteers are available every day of the year to offer emotional support and signposting to children and young people in crisis. The service is available over the phone, via email and web chat, plus through an online directory and free help app.

For more information please visit www.getconnected.org.uk

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NOTES TO EDITORS: For more information or accompanying images please contact Catherine Sweet, Marketing & Communications Manager at Get Connected: 020 7009 2516 / catherine.sweet@getconnected.org.uk

- **Get Connected is the UK's free, confidential and multi-issue helpline service for young people under 25 who need help, but don't know where to turn. We help young people find a path to a brighter future.**
- Get Connected is registered charity number 1081840 and depends entirely on voluntary donations. Get Connected is a key partner of Child Helpline International, a global network of 192 child helplines in 145 countries.
- Sponsors for Ride 999 include: Domestic & General, Caparol, CVC Capital Partners, The Living Leader and Indesit. For full details please visit www.getconnected.org.uk/ride999
- To donate to the campaign please visit

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